



SQUIRE: Robin Springett, Calpe Villa, 57, Seymour Drive,
Dartmouth, Devon TQ6 9GE. Tel 01803 832062
Email: springetrobin@googlemail.com

BAGMAN: Charlie Corcoran, 70, Greengate Lane, Birstall,
Leicestershire, LE4 3DL. Tel: 01162 675654
Email: bagman@themorrisring.org

TREASURER: Steven Archer, 28 The Glade, Fetcham, Surrey,
KT22 9TH. Tel: 01372 454024
Email: treasurer@barwick-green.co.uk

Newsletter No. 83

February 2013

Page The highlights of Newsletter No.83 include:

2. Programme for the 2013 ARM Weekend
3. 2013 ARM Agenda
- Squire's Report: Robin Springett
6. Bagman's Report: Charlie Corcoran
10. Treasurer's Report: Steven Archer (Accounts on separate sheet)
12. Morris Shop: Steve BfB Adamson
13. Archival Reports: Chris Metherell and colleagues
18. Social Media Report: Ollie King
19. Overseas Bagman's Report: Nigel Strudwick
20. Web Editor's Report: Peter De Courcy
21. Elections
22. Area Reps Reports: (inc. report on Musicians Weekend Pg 27)
32. & Pg 34 Future Programme
- Other items:
33. Squire's Massed Dances for 2013
 Live Music - up-date
34. Morris Ring Publications: Contact reminder
35. Up-dates on 2013 Meetings:
 - 335th Adelaide Morris
 - JMO Sat 20th April Exeter Hosts: Great Western Morris
 - 336th Thaxted Morris Men
 - 337th Dolphin Morris Men
 - 338th Martlet Sword & Morris Men
 - 339th Silkeborg Morris
38. 2014 and beyond
42. Redding Moreys

The Morris Ring - Annual Representatives' Meeting

Hosted by Whitchurch MM.

1st - 3rd March 2013

All booking / accommodation enquiries *direct to*: **John Bush**

john_bush@btinternet.com

64 High Street, Weedon, Aylesbury, HP22 4NS

Programme for the 2013 ARM Weekend

Friday

- 18.30 ARM Reception opens.
- 19.00 Bar open - with the opportunity for informal dancing, singing and chat throughout the evening.
- 19.30 - 21.00 Food available (Let John Bush know if you will be arriving after this time)
- 20.30 - Informal gathering for those going to Adelaide

Saturday

- 8.00 - 8.45 Breakfast
- 9.15 - 10.45 Instructional 1
- i. Adelaide Group: Working through the Massed Dances under the tutelage of Robin Springett, Squire of the Morris Ring.
 - ii. Jigs: Ian Nichols (Winchester) & Mike Bennett (St Albans /Winchester)
- 10.45 - 11.15 Coffee
- 11.15 - 12.00 Area Meetings
- 12.30 - 13.30 Buffet Lunch
- 13.45 - 16.30 Annual Reps. Meeting
- 16.30 - 17.00 Tea
- 17.00 - 18.15 Instructional 2
- i. Adelaide Group: Further working the Massed Dances
 - iii. The Upon-upon-Severn Dances: Joe Oldaker (Anker) building on last year, looking at both the 'original' Upton-on-Severn Stick and the Chingford version which is what many teams think of as "Upton Stick".
- 17.00 - 18.15 Advisory Council Meeting
- 19.00 - FEAST (followed by informal dancing/singing)

Sunday

- 8.00 - 9.00 Breakfast & departure

AGENDA for 2013 ARM

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minute's Silence
3. Minutes of the ARM 2012 (Circulated previously as part of Newsletter No. 79 May 2012)
4. Matters arising from the Minutes
 - a. Youth Fund
 - b. 2012 Olympics
5. Squire's Report: Robin Springett

By the time you read this January 2013 will be just about a memory, and down in the South West the spring bulbs will be close to flowering, despite the winter weather which hit most of the country hard, causing cancellation of the Jigs Weekend; the Musicians were luckier! With the ARM very much in our minds we shall be turning our thoughts to the dancing season.

For some, Australia and the Adelaide meeting of Morris Ring Sides is foremost in our minds and our plans. This will be a really odd Morris Ring event, as we now only have one side in Australia - Adelaide - and this meeting will be reliant on those of us travelling from UK. We have a goodly number, and I hope most of you will be coming along to the ARM so we can get together and see how we can put some scratch sides together. Everyone going will be making a big commitment, in time and financially, as Australia is not a cheap destination any more, and I know how much this trip is costing me. I shall miss the spring, my favourite time of year; as to Morris, I shall miss a lot, not least King Johns weekend which this year is on my doorstep in Plymouth. We have now got more information out of our hosts, which we have published, enough I trust to enable all who are going to make the best choices. I feel sure that we should continue to support the only Morris Ring side in Australia, as long as they want to stay with us, but Morris Ring Meetings are now Meetings of Morris Ring Sides, which is subtly different.

On returning, I feel the Morris Ring may wish to review its policy regarding an event quite so far away, and so expensive to attend, to see if our policy was correct. I shall be speaking to the other Officers and to the Advisory Council in the fullness of time, with a view to discussing with the membership at the 2014 ARM. However, before that, we must concentrate on the ARM

this year, and I urge as many as can to attend, doubly so if Bound for South Australia! It will be important to put together the best we can, to give a good account of The Morris Ring, and encourage those trying to preserve our tradition so far away from its place of birth!

Between now and the ARM there is the JMO AGM on the 3rd February; our immediate past squire, treasurer and yours truly will be attending. One important item will be the *Children in Need Appeal*, which was a JMO initiative approved by all 3 organisations. The fund is now over £8.5K, close to the £10K we hoped for. It seems to me that The Morris Ring and the Morris Federation have done well, providing roughly equal shares in the thousands taken forward by Peter Halfpenney personally, and I should like to express my personal thanks to him, Harthill Morris and all the sides that have contributed so much to this appeal (even those sides that paid money directly to Children in Need and not to the dedicated Morris account - you know who you are!). The Morris Ring contribution is even more praiseworthy given the fact that the Morris Federation is roughly three times our size. We plan to give you an update at the ARM and whether we will be giving a cheque to Sir Terry on TV.

Staying with the JMO, you should be aware that the next JMO Day of Dance is on 20th April in Exeter, hosted by Great Western Morris, which is a very individual side that would have little difficulty meeting our standards in a different world order. Also worth watching are another excellent Cotswold side from Exeter: *Glory of The West*, a ladies side. It should be a good day and I hope that Morris Ring sides will take up our full allocation; I have asked Jed Dunn, the acting SW&W Area Rep to chase up sides in the region that could do this without needing accommodation and to coordinate the Morris Ring input so if your side wants to go contact him. Jed will be giving us an update at the ARM.

Closer to home, you will hear from our Treasurer that the Morris Ring finances are in robust good health. For that, you must thank him, and his immediate two predecessors. He has announced that there will be no increase in subs this year or next. In addition, we are quietly seeking ways to assist events which are important to our community, such as instructionals, with targeted subsidies that only apply to Morris Ring sides, and providing a guarantee when money is needed up-front for meetings

organised under the auspices of the Morris Ring; no doubt Steven will be happy to take questions! Less successful has been the Youth Fund, as hardly anyone has sought assistance, which makes me feel the lines have been too tightly drawn. I believe that a Youth Fund is a good idea, but only if it is used, thus I want to open it up in constructive ways; for example, any junior who attends a Morris Ring meeting or instructional should be able to receive up to say 50% rebate through his side. Again, the Treasurer will explain!

Still on the subject of money and costs, I hear two completely conflicting views concerning meetings organised under the auspices of the Morris Ring: "too expensive" or "good value"! Both views are probably right, but there has to be a break point between them, when both points of view converge! Maybe we need to examine exactly what we expect from such Meetings, identify the cost centres - food, accommodation and coaches - and be sure that host sides have driven down costs, whilst maintaining standards. On the other hand, we have Thaxted as a traditional meeting; perhaps we need one other meeting each year that ticks all the boxes, but is as inexpensive as a Weekend of Dance, with the other two or three meetings falling one way or another? This year we have two expensive meetings, both overseas, plus Thaxted, Dolphin and Martlets. I doubt the overseas ones will tell us anything, but we can look at costs and attendances of the others. I intend to ask the Advisory Council to look at costs and suggest alternatives. I am open to all suggestions and believe nothing is off limits for discussion. For example: Do we need to offer food on a Friday and lunch on Sunday?; Can we find venues which remove the need for coaches?; Should we have an all camping meeting?; Cold buffets, self-service feasts? ... etc. I would like to see a Meeting of Morris Ring Sides offered for less than £40; can we do it I wonder, and would it meet our expectations? Who knows until we try!

Every year we lose key members, but every so often we lose a giant. Last year we lost Ivor Allsop, and those of you who attended his funeral may never see the like again. The Morris Ring will publish a tribute to Ivor later in the year. However, you should be aware that most of Ivor's personal archive was left to Phil Heaton, who plans to digitalise it and make it accessible to all. Those items applicable to the Morris Ring which were in Ivor's possession have, or will be taken into the care of our Archive section.

Finally, for my first ARM in the chair, I plan to touch on the old chestnut of recruitment. I feel that the only thing the Morris Ring can do is be supportive and offer to spread best practice to all sides. One area Rep has done a very comprehensive survey of the sides in his area, which broadly finds the following. *Most sides are in equilibrium; they recruit as many members as they lose; most are ageing to some extent, and a few are rapidly moving to obscurity, whilst a few combine dance outs with nearby sides to make up for shortage of numbers.* I would hazard a guess that taken across our membership, all will fit somewhere in that summary! I do not pretend that recruiting new members is anything but hard work; most membership organisations will tell you the same. I remind you all that our membership is made up of sides that freely decide to sign up to the aims and ideals of the Morris Ring. It is up to those sides to run their affairs as they wish. I am sure that everyone is aware that having chosen to keep our dancing all male, we make recruiting young people more difficult. Perhaps we should team up with other local sides and try running joint training, who knows, but the status quo is a decline in numbers; currently, that is slow, but it could accelerate as many of us approach the end of our dancing days together. That is your wish, and until we either disappear, or you, collectively call for change, the Morris Ring officers will support you in your choices! I wish you good health, happiness and good dancing, but most of all, good companionship during the coming season.

6. Bagman's Report: Charlie Corcoran

I will begin with my usual catalogue of thanks, foremost of which must be to my wife who while she no-longer has to field dozens of phone calls frequently passes remarks such as "You're not still on the computer!" or "How many emails?" and to the members of my own side: Leicester Morris men who continue to be supportive. Next, to my fellow Bagmen (by the way I see this as a non-gender-specific title) who fall into two groups: the old hands who have been in post for so long they know which emails to ignore and which *definite-maybe's* from their side really mean "No, but I cannot really make up my mind as I might get a better offer" and those who were elected when they had popped out to the loo and cannot wait for the opportunity to ditch the role. We bagmen really do fill an essential niche in the Morris world -

toiling as we do to keep our side (team or whatever you call yourselves,) running. I do appreciate how hard it is to get people to read notices, or emails, much less commit themselves to an event or booking: Phoning round to get a side for an event that months ago everyone said - "Yes - of course we'll do that!"

I have said before that I consider myself as part of the Civil Service of the Morris Ring (but sadly without the perks and pension) and it is fortunate that Steven and I communicate frequently and effectively and I would like to record here my thanks to him - especially with reference to the maintenance of the membership & contact information data. The Morris Ring is a small organisation, with a considerable history, but with officers who have yet to master the psychic powers that seem to be expected of us to maintain an up-to-date contact list - for this I apologise.

Over my time as Bagman of the MR I have managed to reduce my essential Morris Ring expenditure through both frequent car-sharing with Steve BfB and more recently with Peter Halfpenney and through getting most of my printing done *at cost* through my place of work (Great thanks here to Carole Crowder our Printing Goddess). This continued following my retirement but due to academisation this is no longer possible and I have warned Steven that these costs will rise considerably in the future.

I will miss my nocturnal chats with Steve BfB, who has indicated that he wishes to relinquish his post as Keeper of the Morris Shop. Few of you will remember when the Morris Shop was simply a source of bells, and Blue & Black Books (the Sharp Books and Lionel Bacon's Handbook before you start thinking of Max Miller's Joke Books). Under Steve's management it made the increasing number of then Morris-linked tapes and later CDs and books accessible to the Morris Ring membership long before the invention of the internet. Steve through the unstinting use of his own time has raised the large sums that have helped to subsidise our activities and to keep our subs down. He also had the foresight to encourage the review of our expenditure that has enabled us to maintain our level of service to our membership without a vast hike in subscriptions. He is also a wonderful proof reader - an invaluable aide to someone with spelling as poor as mine!

Working with different Squires is always going to be interesting - each having their own interpretation of the role and ambitions for the Morris

Ring. Bob (Cross) I knew well - coming from the same town; Paul Reece, slightly daunting as he was from the oh so traditional Thaxted; Brian who helped me to begin to appreciate Sword; Peter who behind the slightly brash exterior is remarkable diplomatic (as demonstrated by his steering us through the frequently acrimonious debates concerning women musicians) and now Robin, a world-traveller. All have had one thing in common - a great desire to see the Morris Ring grow if not in size certainly in influence. I thank them all.

Through my role as editor of the Newsletter I have occasionally printed items that have ruffled feathers - especially when I have included articles that some thought more appropriate for the Circular. For these instances I offer my apologies to Harry Stevenson, the retiring editor of The Circular. He has really done a sterling job. Not wanting to put his successor off before he starts but it is not easy to conjure up articles in time to meet deadlines - especially when promised copy does not materialise. Like me he was really dependent upon the wider membership of the Morris Ring, and increasingly the wider Morris community, for content. In an attempt to make the Editorship of the MR Circular more practicable the Squire has proposed that it be published three times a year - at times to mirror the wider Morris calendar: November; March & June.

As an aside, I propose that the Newsletter remain as a paper resource for those who want it in that format but that sides and individual subscribers can opt to simply access it via the now excellent Morris Ring web site.

Comparatively new to my litany of thanks is Peter de Courcy, an excellent fool and Editor in Chief of our website. He, along with Martin Jones, who designed the web site, help me to cope with the technology. The Morris Ring website is proving invaluable to both our membership but also to the public - if the number of enquires I receive via bagman@themorrisring.org and anything to judge by. Here I ought to thank and apologise to the Area Reps to whom I forward many "Can you dance at my daughter's wedding" or Corporate event requests - frequently at short notice.

Our growing expansion into Social Media is covered by Ollie King in his report and I strongly recommend that all sides should follow his advice. If we hope to attract the attention of the youngsters this is where they are

looking. Well-maintained web sites are essential but tweets, blogs and YouTube videos are so much more instant!

Our links with the other Morris organisations, and that of course the EFDSS, must not go unrecorded. The JMO shows that the war is over and Morris won.



Please do remember to request and use the Morris Ring Display Boards. We have five sets and they currently reside with Roger Comley (South Midlands); Robin Springett (South West); Fred Hands (South East) and I have two sets in my garage. They cost a lot of money and caused Brian Tasker a great deal of angst whilst he was Squire. They are a waste of money and space if your side does not make use of them whenever opportunities present themselves.

Thanks here to Brian for getting the Sefton Candelabra fitted with a replacement plaque - the original having been held on with blu-tack for years and finally lost at a Thaxted feast.



One innovation I about which I need to comment: direct application to sides hosting events organised under the auspices of the Morris Ring - formally known as *Morris Ring Meetings*. Even though I tried to make this clear at the beginning of the application process for 2013 events there was confusion. Recent changes have meant that it is really up to the host side who they do or do not accept at their meeting so my 'booking agent' role was superfluous. This, along with the two overseas meetings this year for which it was essential that sides seeking to attend knew sooner rather than later whether their application had been successful to allow flights, etc. to be booked, made change inevitable. Thaxted have accepted direct-bookings for years and it has worked.

I remain proud to be Bagman of the Morris Ring but give notice that I will stand down in 2015 when this current term of office expires.

7. Treasurer's Report: Steven Archer

Introduction

I now see why March is a good time to take over as the new Treasurer. Initially there is little to do but track the Hosted Meetings and follow up on a few straggling subscriptions BUT once the summer is over its subscription time and the job really starts.

So my first thanks therefore go to all the sides that paid their subs by standing order before 30th November and kindly sent me their renewal forms fully typed. I won't mention how many (or few) that is but my dearest wish is that it will be more next year. I've tried to make it easy to pay online and submit forms electronically but if I can help you further please let me know.

Ed Worrall has been a great support to me this year, steering me through the occasional minefield with great clarity and briefing me on new situations. Charlie has also been a great support. Like all good Bagmen the real work he does goes largely unnoticed. And Peter has been very tolerant of my attempts to rapidly climb the learning curve. Now Robin is in post I'm no longer the new boy and I look forward to supporting him as he gets his feet under the table.

Income

Income from *subscriptions* fell by some £300; but as the analysis shows, the 2012 figures include some £1,000 of late subs from 2011. Far fewer subs are overdue this year and so the 2013 figure is expected to be much lower, reflecting the fact that 11 sides did not renew in 2012.

The *Morris Shop* on the other hand has done remarkably well during this period of general austerity, increasing its margin and providing nearly £4,000 of income on a reduced turnover. Steve BfB does a tremendous job, most of which goes on behind the scenes. There were nearly 300 lines on his stock take and most of it fits into his remarkable Tardis to magically appear at meetings all over the country. Thank you BfB: I'll miss your distinctive e-mails and fascinating chats about the rarity of two part pressed metal bells.

Hosted Meetings went well this year. Only Thaxted ran at a loss and was unable to make a donation. As you will see Hartley made a cracking £780

donation from their collection, providing the majority of this valuable income. I will outline plans below to reshape the way meetings are financed.

Other donations raised over £300. I have chosen to highlight a previously invisible benefit. Morris Ring officers are entitled to a modest level of claimable expenses. On occasions some choose to reduce their claims below this entitlement to the benefit of the membership. Rather than just show this as lower expenses I have declared the full amount as expenditure and the under claim as a donation. So this money effectively came from your officers.

Expenditure

Insurance rates have remained largely unchanged but the excess has been raised from £100 to £250. The cost of publications rose a little this year and can be expected to rise much more as the effects of increased postage come through and the availability of low cost publication disappears with Charlie's retirement from his day job.

The *officers' expenses* rose significantly. This was due to the effect of showing the full cost as referred to above and the fact that we had two Squires during the year. This cost will reduce in the coming year.

General expenses reduced significantly in the absence of one-off costs like website development and display banners.

We made £400 of *charitable donations* in the year, £200 to the JMO Children in Need appeal, £100 to Ben Moss' morris marathon and £100 to the Sussex Schools Children's Dance Festival.

Results and future

The net result of all this was to realise an increased surplus for the year, increasing the overall financial strength of the Morris Ring funds. This puts our finances in a very good position at a time of increasing austerity, rising costs and falling membership. This has enabled us to make several commitments of benefit to the membership:

- Firstly it is our intention to freeze subscription rates for the foreseeable future.
- Secondly, as previously announced, there will be some direct support for sides running Hosted Meetings. The idea here is to directly reduce the cost for members attending the meeting whilst encouraging them to be

proactive in collecting from the public during the weekend. If this is successful this coming year we will build on the policy for the future.

Direct financial support has also been offered to the *Jigs weekend*, encouraging new members by reducing the cost of their attendance. Unfortunately the weather scuppered the event but the offer will be made again next year.

I hope that further *youth initiatives* will be forthcoming to promote the growth of a younger membership. To date only one claim has been made upon the 75th Youth Fund.

Put together this is an ambitious combination of direct subsidy and increased risk taken against a background of increasing costs and falling revenue only made possible by our current financial strength.

I hope that these initiatives will provide a stimulus for our planned activities and increase their accessibility and enjoyment for everyone.

Steven Archer

THE MORRIS SHOP - The time has come!

After 19 years of very happy Morris Shop keeping, I have decided that the time is now right for me to move on and allow someone else the opportunity of enjoying the position of The Morris Ring Emporium Keeper.

I do not believe that there is anyone out there who has not seen or experienced how I chose to do things whilst out and about with the current emporium. I feel certain that the lucky candidate will doubtless do things differently and there is nothing wrong in that. It is not impossible for the Morris Shop format to undergo a total revamp, and there is nothing wrong with that either. Fresh eyes and ears equal fresh ideas!

For many years The Morris Shop might have given everyone that idea that it is solely a one-man-band. I can assure you that this has not been the case. The current Morris Shop format has only been possible to achieve due to a great deal of assistance from many others beavering away in the background.

So, what will happen now?

Your Morris Ring needs YOU!

I will officially step down from my current roll at the 2013 ARM but fret ye not! I will continue the Morris Shop mail order department for as long as the stock remains at my humble abode in Bradford. This will prevent there being any abrupt guillotine until such time as a successor is in place. The big short-term difference will be with the ceasing of the travelling emporium. Regarding this aspect I must offer my apologies to the 2013 event hosts with whom 'contractual obligations' had already been entered into i.e. Thaxted MM and Dolphin MM.

Over the last 19 years or so, I hope I have successfully demonstrated that this appointed position can be great fun. As with all these positions it is what the incumbent makes it. If anyone out there would like to contact the Squire of the Morris Ring about this, he would be delighted to hear from you. If you would like a confidential and non-committal chat with me....you know where I am: Tel: 01274 773830 Mob: 07826 299629
Email: Sadamsonbfb@Blueyonder.co.uk

8. Chair of Advisory Council's Report: Peter Halfpenney

Verbal Report

9. Archival Reports:

a. Chair of Archive Committee: *Chris Metherell*

The work of the Archive Group has been somewhat overshadowed this year by the illness and death of Ivor Allsop, former Ring Archivist himself and subsequently the Sword Dance Archivist. Ivor had indicated to many within the Morris Ring that his collection was willed to the Ring, however in the event that has turned out to be incorrect, and the collection is now in private hands. However it is hoped that the material will still be available to interested researchers.

b. Paper: Chris Metherell on behalf of Geoff Douglas

The slow process of dealing with the outstanding papers not deposited at the Essex Record Office continues however work is almost completed. It will be recalled that the ERO would not accept photocopies of articles and book extracts available in libraries and we agreed with them to digitise such holding as we had of these and provide a copy in CD format. By the time you

read this the first version will be available at the ERO containing around a thousand items from over 250 journals, newspapers and books. In parallel with this there is the continuing programmes of digitising films and video, and again, the first batch of archive films available for consultation on DVD are being transferred to the ERO. A list of these will appear (or perhaps by the time you read this will have appeared) in the Newsletter.

c. Photographic: *Duncan Broomhead*

During the past year the photographic archive has continued to grow and has also enjoyed a steady stream of enquiries. New images, with a date range of over 100 years, have come from a variety of sources, including individuals (Morris & non-Morris), Morris Ring sides, other collectors, plus our old pal eBay. Equally important has been the information that people have supplied relating to photographs new to the archive and others already held in the archive.

Keeping any archive should be a two way process, happily we have been able to supply Morris Ring side archivists, collectors and individuals with photographs that were new to them or additional information about photographs they already had. The Morris Ring Photographic Archive has also supplied images and information for research relating to two new books about Morris & sword dance, magazine articles, students and family members of ex dancers.

If you have photographs that you would like including in the archive or want information or images, please get in touch.

d. Mumming: *Ron Shuttleworth*

I think that I have finally finished all that I can do in digitising the Collection. Most of the important books are available over the web. The four or five that aren't, I had Xeroxed so that I could use my scanner's document feed and was able to sell the copies on to defray the cost. I also cut the bindings from the five major American theses, scanned them, and had them re-bound.

Once again I attended the Bath International Mummers' Festival and was able to contribute a short paper to their Symposium.

Material continues to dribble in and all enquiries have been dealt with - otherwise things have been pretty quiet and uneventful. Although I still pick up items from the past, the current dilemma is how best to deal with the flood of trivia on the Internet. I have yet to resolve this.

Ron Shuttleworth

e. Sword: (See Above)

f. Sound: Andy Padmore

The sound archivist is in possession of the Morris Ring collection of cassettes and reel to reel material. I continue when time permits to digitise the tapes, but progress is slow as he is not yet fully retired and digitising tapes is not his only 'hobby'. Two enquiries for sound files both of which he has been able to deal with.

The Sound Archive has received, from the previous Squire of the Morris Ring, a contact who had apparently got a small collection of folk material on 78 r.p.m. records. All that was given was an email address. Three attempts to email the person but without a reply and no further attempts have been made. It is not known what the records actually were as we were not provided with a list, or how many records were involved.

The Sound Archive has not actively sought out sound material to add to the archive, but the archivist is always happy and willing to receive anything thought worth keeping and suitable. At this time there are no guidelines about what is deemed suitable, so 'anything goes'.

The archivist did consider the possibility of compiling a list of sound material that is extant and its present location. That means of course material in the possession of Morris (in its widest context) teams that might be considered important, rare or valuable as a reference. This has not been taken this further because of the time involved in such a project, and its usefulness has not been assessed. This is perhaps something to consider in the fullness of time, but for the moment remains simply an idea.

g. New Dance Collator: Mike Wilkinson

I put myself forward for this role a few years ago on an impulse because the Morris Ring had not had a New Dance Collator for so long that they were thinking of giving up on the position. I see the role, such as it is, as "collating" information that is sent to me rather than going out and actively collecting material. I'm not an archivist by nature, so too often I have allowed the role to consist of no more than saving stuff to a folder on my hard drive and promising myself to sort it out later.

However, I have a strong interest in teaching and describing dances. I teach a range of jigs and Headington dances in my own side, and I also teach at the annual Jigs Instructional. In connection with these roles, I have spent a fair bit of time trying to develop a consistent way of presenting dances in a simple format that can be read and instantly understood by someone who is not a dance teacher, and who may not find interpreting standard notation easy. I am now at about the stage where I can start applying this to the material that I have collated. Once I have done so, it will be a simple matter to make the notes available in pdf format.

In addition to this, my awareness of my role as Collator has perhaps made me that bit more likely to snaffle good ideas for my own side, and also to experiment with new dances that are in keeping with our mainstream traditions. Looking back over the last few seasons, I notice that there are several completely new dances that have quietly bloomed and become part of our main repertoire - and this, to me, is what it's all about: the dancing. I am far more interested in seeing dances performed and enjoyed than seeing them committed to paper and then stored away like a Victorian gentleman's butterfly collection.

So what material do I have?

Banchory have given me very detailed notes of their dance list, including a processional, 6 stick dances, 2 hanky dances, and 2 jigs.

Braybrooke have sent me their entire dance list. Most of these are fairly standard repertoire, but there are several from the "Braybrooke Tradition".

Dolphin, my own side, has produced a few new dances - although most of these are annotated in my head, rather than on paper at the moment!

Moulton have sent me notes, including the gloriously named dance: *Knuckles aKimbo*.

I have an interesting variant on the Lichfield hey from **New St George Morris**.

Rumford have sent me a Bledington style dance called The Bull, to the tune of *Barwick Green*, and named after the pub in Ambridge.

Utrecht have sent me details of the Bampton style dance, *Riggs of Doom*.

Wessex have told me of a dance called *The Giant*, inspired by the Cerne Abbas hill figure. However, because of the local connection, they do not wish the dance to be adopted by other sides.

Woodside have sent me details of a dance called *Captain Lamoe's Skirmish*. Coincidentally, I have written a simple Headington style dance for Dolphin to a version of the same tune which I know as *Captain Leno*.

Adlington have sent me their dance book, with various Ilmington dances in it. In addition to this, I have various odds and ends of tunes and scraps of notes. One of my difficulties is that everyone who writes notes already understands what it is that they are writing, and their notes are often an *aide memoire* for themselves, and are less useful for communicating the material to a reader with no prior knowledge of the dance.

I am happy to carry on in the role, or to step aside if there is someone who is keen to take over. Whether or not I stay in the role, I will continue to show an interest in new dances, and in finding ways to present them clearly.

Michael Wilkinson Mikefule@aol.com

h. Keeper of the Morris Ring Scrapbook: Cliff Marchant

No report received

i. Keeper of the Morris Ring Log Book: Charlie Corcoran

Brief Verbal Report

10. Publication Officers Reports:

i. Editor Morris Circular: Harry Stevenson

ii. Editor Morris Dancer: Andrew Bullen / Mac McCoig

iii. Social Network Coordinator's Report: Olli King

The Facebook page remains as active as is possible to make it.

Administrators for the page are myself, Martin Jones (Dartington MM) and Pete de Courcy (Kennett MM). We try to post updates about events going on over the summer, and any other important news in the Morris and folk world. With the aid of my trusty iPhone, I managed to document the Hartley Meeting last year in real time, with updates throughout the weekend, and photographs of the important events that took place. The statistics show this was very well received. Some updates were made over the Chipping Campden weekend (many thanks to Matt Simons for the use of his iPhone), though not as many as hoped due to lack of signal! I think live updates are a really good way of connecting with the public, and is something I'm keen to explore more. Obviously, at the moment, this can only be done if I, Martin or Pete are a) at a Meeting; b) have a iPhone/smartphone and c) have signal to access the site. I would like to have as many Meetings as possible documented in this way in 2013. At present, I'm unsure of which meetings I will be at, but if anyone feels they would be able post updates at any of the Meetings this year (especially Adelaide, as I definitely won't be attending), please email me and we can discuss it.

The page is there for 'fans' of the Morris Ring and is open to anyone to 'like'. The page currently has 303 likes. Our most popular time was the weekend of the Hartley Meeting, our most popular age group is 55-64 years old and the male to female ratio is 4:1. For comparison, the Morris Federation page has 640 likes, and the Open Morris has 174 members in its group (a format of Facebook representation that I would not suggest sides use - more on that later). The Fed page is however considerably less active than ours, though they do have a good collection of photographs from the dancing at their 2012 AGM (74), and the 2012 JMO Day of Dance (30). I'd like to be able to have albums of pictures from our Meetings on our page, aside from the pictures posted as live updates. I've seen many, many people taking photographs on digital cameras, so please send any good ones in! Pictures from past weekends would also be good. I'm happy to receive multiple photos, but please sort the wheat from the chaff as I don't have time to do this.

Also, please send any items of interest that your club may be doing (not stands or dance outs - this page is not for that), so we can post it. Much of

the content of the page is down to clubs letting us know what's going on out there, as we don't have eyes and ears everywhere!

The Morris Ring also has a Twitter account. At the moment, this is linked to the Facebook page, and Facebook updates are posted there. I will admit to not checking it nearly as often as I should, and it is not currently perhaps used to its full potential. I do, however, think that Twitter may work better for sides, rather than the Morris Ring as a whole, as they are simply more active, which fits in with the short, sharp nature of Twitter. Ideas on how to develop this area of our social media presence are welcome.

Once again, I would like to encourage sides to create Facebook and Twitter presences, and to keep them updated! It's the same as a website - no one likes seeing an out of date website, and no one likes seeing a poorly updated Facebook page! I have prepared a document, available either by email or in paper copy, on how to set up a Facebook and Twitter presence.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheMorrisRing

Twitter: www.twitter.com/TheMorrisRing

Please like and follow, both as your club and on your personal accounts.

oliver.king11@btinternet.com

11. Overseas Bagman's Report

I took on this role at the ARM in 2012. I am truly an Overseas Bagman, being domiciled at present in Memphis, USA. John Maher is an impossible act to follow. I understand the role is now basically to liaise with overseas sides, and to offer advice if possible to UK sides wanting to know about matters foreign. I do not have access to any files John had about overseas festivals etc but I will keep a note of any which are drawn to my attention.

In Morris Ring membership we have the following seven overseas sides in these geographical areas:

Channel Islands:	Helier MM (Jersey)
The Netherlands:	Het Utrechts Morris Team, Helmond MM
Denmark:	Silkeborg MM
North America:	Pinewoods MM (Massachusetts), Vancouver MM
Australia:	Adelaide MM

For the purposes of compiling these brief notes, I have attempted to contact all these sides; only Vancouver have not responded. I have updated contact information for these sides which I will pass on to the Ring Officers so the database can be kept up to date. All the sides who have responded send greetings to the Morris Ring clubs.

The overseas events are this year very prominent. The UK presence at the Adelaide Meeting in April is being handled by the Ring Squire, while the Silkeborg Meeting in August is being handled in the usual manner of a Meeting. Silkeborg have expressed the wish to me that more sides from the UK could come, and so I will be reminding everyone of this event.

Otherwise there is nothing else to report. Sides are encouraged to contact me if they are going abroad so I can keep a note of where individual teams have been in case this will be of use to other sides in the future.

Nigel Strudwick

12. Web Editor's Report

It's hard to believe that it's well over a year since the new look Ring Web Site was launched back in November 2011 and that we've been able to access all key content since March 2012. Martin & Jayne Jones (Natty Web Development) designed and brought to life our wonderful website. We must thank them not only for their technical wizardry but for the happy, cooperative and efficient manner in which they executed their contract.

Keith Ashman (Manchester) was our "man on the inside" and we must express our thanks to him for his IT skills and knowledge and for acting as the link man between the technical development and the content upload. His input and logic saved dozens of man-hours of unnecessary work.

At the end of 2011 Martin trained up a team of volunteer up-loaders and sub-editors responsible for transferring old content and creating new. In the next few months, Keith and myself, in my new role of Editor in Chief, were able to evolve the website with significant contributions from Andy Bullen (Chicago), Geoff Knapman (Bourne River), Jason Standing (Westminster), Richard Thomas (Chalice), Charlie Corcoran (MR Bagman) and, who could forget, Steve BfB Adamson (Keeper of the Morris Shop).

Natty Web Development remain as webmasters, looking after the security and back-up aspects of the site, fielding and dealing with technical issues reported to them by myself and others. Problems have been few, but Martin has regularly risen to the challenge of "What if...?" and developments and improvements will continue.

Innovations we are particularly proud of include the recently enhanced Find a Side pages, the "Black Book" pages of morris tunes and The Morris Shop. New ideas are always welcome (if not always achievable). As Peter Halfpenney wrote at the time "The project has been carefully managed and nurtured and the co-operative and enthusiastic spirit displayed by all contributors and the think-tank approach to problem solving ... we have a Morris Ring website of which to be inordinately proud and which stands as a worthy tribute to the memory of John Maher, the founding father of our internet portal." And it's not just Peter $\frac{1}{2}$ p who thinks we have a site worth visiting. In 2012 we averaged over 3000 "unique" visitors each month out of a total of 55,000 visits in the year, viewing a total of nearly 190,000 pages (well there are over 80 to choose from).

We're keen to have a lively, fresh and informative site that is a first port of call for anyone with an interest in Morris - sounds a bit like a mission statement! But news, in our opinion, must be newsworthy and not just for the sake of it. So if your side has items or photos you believe are of national (or even international) interest, or a traditional annual event worthy of inclusion in our seasonal calendar, please, please let me know at webeditor@themorrisring.org. If you want something more carefree, I suggest you try Ollie's Facebook page ☺

Peter de Courcy The Morris Ring Website Editor in Chief
(What a mouthful - better known as Kennet's Fool)

13. Elections

- a. Ballot for Bagman of Morris Ring. No nominations have been received but as has already been stated the incumbent is willing to continue until 2015.
- b. Ratification of Area Representatives following decisions reached at Area Meetings:

Traditionally the 'election' of Area Reps is informal! At a gathering of the sides in each area, usually on the morning of the ARM, agreement is reached as to whom will represent them for the following three years. This is reported to the main ARM later in the day.

- Northern Vacancy - no nominations so far received (2015)
- South West & Wales Jed Dunn (2014) (Ratification of appointment)
- North East Brian Pollard (2016) (Willing to continue)
- Eastern Mike Stevens (2016) (Willing to continue)
- South East One candidate: Ian Bush (2016)

c. Announcement / Ratification of

- Editor Morris Ring Circular: Anthony Foard (Mersey Morris)

14. Area Representatives Reports.

a. North West

David Loughlin (2014)

Most of the Morris sides in the North West area are on a turn round, the Clubs are getting new members joining when we expected that some of the Clubs might have to fold due to old age or injuries.

Royal Preston Morris Dancers did perform and take an active part at the Preston Guild Celebrations an achievement well deserved. They have a new set of kit and dancing very well, they are also looking at reviving an old dance. I hope they continue for another twenty years ready for the next one well done lads we are all proud of your determination.

Britannia Coco-nut Dancers of Bacup have hit in the news in recent weeks with the Council and Police making it awkward for the traditional Easter Saturday Dancing Boundary to Boundary of the Town. They are determined that the day will happen and would like the day to go without any incident, they have good support from the local residences and any support from the morris is welcome, the only dancing is done by Bacup, but please turn up and enjoy the day.

North British Sword Dancers have now danced in as full members of the Morris Ring at Harley Ring Meeting, before they were associate members.

Manchester is still visiting schools usually Primary Schools showing and teaching Cotswold Morris and the Abram dance, but also more importantly trying to revive the University Side and that looks hopeful at the moment it's Cotswold, but they hope eventually for them to learn Manchester's North West traditions to keep them going strong.

Generally as I've said times are looking a lot better Mersey Morris Men have had their best year ever and also four new members have joined the side. Leyland, Horwich Prize Medal, Chester City, Thelwall and Saddleworth have also got new recruits joining.

Dates to note:-

Saturday 20 th March	Bacup Coco-nuters Day
Saturday 20 th April	Horwich Prize Medal Day of Dance
Saturday 20 th July	Buxton Day of Dance
Sat 24 th and Sun 25 th August	Saddleworth Rushcart

Dave Loughlin - North West Rep

b. Northern

Vacancy

c. North East

Brian Pollard (2013)

I have nothing to report from North East. Assume all is well.

d. West Midlands

Pete Simpson (2014)

We had another lively year here in the West Midlands. The highlights of which were the very successful *Chipping Campden Weekend*, which took place on the warmest and sunniest weekend of an otherwise very wet year, and the JMO in *Stratford on Avon*. Whilst not an event organised by the Morris Ring, this year, with the high profile location of the Morris Shop and it seemed like a Shakespeare Morris man at every turn it is easy to think it may have been.

The main dancing season always ends for me with *Bromyard Folk festival* were at least 6 Morris ring teams turned out and put on some fine displays. Of course the end of year bash, were so many of us Cotswold man black our faces and indulge in what is known as the *Original Welsh Border Tour*. Despite its best efforts, the weather only caused one spot to be missed and

for the first time in a few years we finished outside the Guild Hall in Worcester, a great spot.

Earlsdon Morris Men

Earlsdon Morris Men danced out on 20 occasions between April and December 2012. This included five folk festivals; St George's weekend; Easter Monday; Westminster and the JMO in Stratford. We also went to foreign lands; a weekend in Edinburgh and a day of dance at the National Botanic Gardens of Wales, where our flowery hats were much appreciated. Although we currently have 28 dancers and 15 musicians on our books, many of these perform with other sides and some live quite far away so it is still not easy to turn out a team.

Faithful City Morris Men

Membership has stayed steady losing 1 and gaining 1 and enough men to usually have 2 sides up on our Wednesday nights out in the summer, amazingly none of which were rained off.

Other events included a trip to Sidmouth; our annual weekend at Bromyard and at the Badsey flower show had the unusual treat of being filmed for the ITV, with Linda Bellingham, which was broadcast on Friday 7th September whilst we were doing gate duty at Bromyard!

On the charity side we did Children in Need (£433.79), Wassail at Green Street Farm for Macmillan (£400), Barrs Court School, Malvern Acorns and Sidmouth Lifeboats (£61.15) with help from *Greensleeves Morris Men*.

Forest of Dean Morris Men

Wednesday night dancing out has been wonderfully supported this year with the added bonus of meeting up with many other Morris teams. Weekends have been so busy some events have had to be turned down despite of 20 members on the books. The annual Forest of Dean Morris Festival Tour and weekend was a great success

Green Man's Morris & Sword Club

We danced at the Mall in Sutton Coldfield in March and followed this up with a free 'taster session' one week later. Unfortunately, just as in 2011, although there had been interest at our performance, this failed to follow on to the taster session.

We did however dance at the Duke of York in Lichfield on St. George's Day and we are pleased to report that following on from that we have had a new man

join us. Later in the year, we also got a further new recruit, who made contact with us via the website. We performed at Shugborough Hall and Middleton Hall on the early May Bank Holiday and led the Bower procession on June 4th. We also performed at a wedding in Earlswood in May. Apart from these events, we also danced at our usual haunts. Our performances ended with a visit to the Letchworth Ring Meeting in July.

Regrettably, the year was overshadowed by the death of Mike Hammond in July. Mike had been a stalwart of the Club for many years and he is, and will be, sorely missed

Jockey Morris - State of the Club address 2013

As some of you may have seen in our Christmas and New Year movie on Youtube or Facebook, we in Jockey had another varied and very enjoyable year in 2012. We kicked off as usual with our Plough Tour in Birmingham, and were pleased to have around 40 guests with us. A great day, and the weather was kind.

Jockey had pub evenings with *Pebworth, Green Man, Bedcote and Anker*. All excellent (if a tad damp at times). We had good times at *Westminster's Day of Dance, Saddleworth Rushcart and Bromyard*, took part in the Evesham Morris Weekend and the JMO in Stratford, and helped *Chalice* celebrate their 40-ish years. Similarly Jockey helped the Queen celebrate her 60 years, in Birmingham's Jubilee events. We also danced at an international conference at the ICC (They gave us free food - some people never learn...)

One standout event was the Easter weekend visit of our friends De Rollewagen from Flanders. We've had a great relationship with them since 1999, and this was their third visit to Birmingham. Later in the year we headed over the channel for another marvellous weekend. This time it was not for a Festival, but to put on Morris workshops for two sides, Nele and Farandole, in Grimbergen and Anderlecht. This was something we haven't done before; it was great fun and we made some wonderful new friends.

In general, our dancing has been of a good standard and enjoyable for all of us. We are introducing some new Cotswold dances to the repertoire and reviving some others, which is always good to keep the freshness and interest going. Our Rapper is coming on very well, and we will be attending DERT in 2013, showing off our brand new sashes.

As usual, a big concern is recruitment. It's good to be able to say that one of our younger guys, who has been away from Jockey for a while, has recently been able to return to the fold, and our youngest dancer is now performing with us more often, but we have only been able to recruit one or two new members. Jockey does, though, have an excellent Associate Members scheme. It keeps us in touch with men who have moved away, and others who have never been full members but who dance with us whenever they are within striking distance! Our associates are a real asset to us, and it's good to keep our extended family together.

This year is shaping up to be another fine one for us, and we seem to be gaining a lot of followers on Facebook and Twitter. More visibility can only be a good thing, so let's hope we can make the recruitment breakthrough in 2013.

1ST Sedelgley Morris Men

At the start of the year we held a delayed AGM. Following the untimely death of our Squire Pete Round in September 2011 we wanted to wait a few months before dealing with the appointment of a replacement. Jack Roberts filled in as previous incumbent and chaired the meeting. Paul Davis was unanimously elected as Squire, Jack Cotterill to continue as Foreman, Dave Jeffery as Bagman and Graham Suffolk took on Pete's other previous role as Wardrobe Mistress.

In memory of Pete Paul choreographed a new dance in the Sedgley Tradition - "Pete's Round" which has been performed in displays many times in 2012. During the year we fulfilled our usual commitments - *Jockey* Plough Tour, Dudley for St George's Day, May the 1st on the Beacon, Maypole Festival for local schools, Kinver & Harborne Carnivals and dancing at Ashwood Nurseries. We also danced at a number of other fetes or events. One noticeable frustration in the last couple of years has been the number of requests from commercial organisations either wanting to book us for events hundreds of miles away or local corporate events that failed to materialise despite a lot of work putting a side together at our end.

We attended Bromyard Folk Festival as a side. On the 21st of June we were involved with our annual tour with Ewell St Mary Morris Men this year centred on Brackley and with the participation of Brackley Morris Men - an

excellent day out. We have also joined with other local sides for dancing out (when the weather permitted) during the summer.

Membership remained static until October when 2 new members joined us (both in their 30s and very enthusiastic). There are 19 active members as dancers and musicians at the start of 2013. Total membership is 24.

Our repertoire remained the same during the year; however, with new blood (and fitness) we hope to get back to some dances that have slipped from our regular list in recent years and maybe even some new ones!!

Shakespeare Morris Men

We started the year as star performers in the production of "A Fete worse than Death" the play was performed by a local Amateur Dramatics Group but it called for the opening scene of a group of Morris Dancers looking for the Beer Tent and deciding to practice (I know!) at the fete.

For the second wettest year on record, we weren't too badly affected by the rain. We danced with a number of other sides (including another memorable evening in Warwick) as well as the regular events in our calendar including the Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations and May Day dance-out in Stratford upon Avon. We also participated in the JMO day of Dance, also in Stratford.

In May, together with Ilmington and Chipping Campden, we co-hosted the Chipping Campden Ring Meeting on what was probably the best weekend weather of the entire summer. In July we entertained the thousands of people who had gathered to see the Olympic torch being carried through Stratford upon Avon.

Our regular programme of events continued into the darker months: We escorted the Mayoral procession at the opening of the annual mop fair in October and also the switching on of the Christmas lights in Stratford. We also danced at the switching on of the Christmas lights in Bidford on Avon, keeping our links with the town as guardians of the Bidford Morris tradition.

We welcomed four new members during 2012, one of whom being our first female musician.

e. North Midlands

Ben Robinson (2015)

No report received

Musicians' Instructional Hosts: the Ripley Morris Men 25th - 27th Jan 2013.
The Instructional went ahead despite dire weather forecasts, and was attended by 22 musicians. Leaders Malcolm Frier, Clive DuMont, Tim Barber, Keith Kendrick and Sylvia Needham represent Ripley Morris, Mendip, Claro and Winster respectively, while the delegates were drawn from Aldbury, Bourne River, Chip Off The Old, Harthill, Kits Coty, Lincoln and Micklebarrow, Mersey, Ravensbourne, Wessex, Woodchurch and Wyverne Jubilee. Two others from Richmond-on-Swale did not manage to get through the snow.

The instructional ran mostly along tried and tested lines, with some variations and additions. Having established the consciousness and competence of the musicians, recording and playback sessions allowed delegates to listen to their own performances and be self-critical, as well as inviting other feedback. Newer sessions included a study of the limitations of written musical notation in representing music of a danceable nature, and an exploration of the influence on the music of a musician's chosen instrument. This latter session began with the suggestion made to Sharp by former dancers that Morris was dying out because the fiddle was replacing the "proper" instruments. Use was made of those multi-instrumental delegates and leaders to play the same Morris tune on different instruments, and to compare the resulting performances from the dancing perspective.

Keith and Sylvia gave a short presentation on the Winster tradition, including playing a number of unfamiliar Winster tunes. Winster is a unique tradition in that most of its dances are processional in nature. On Saturday evening, attendees were invited to the Ripley Morris Annual Ale Feast, at which they were able to perform as musicians. The Group also performed a Canon by John Tallis in 4 parts.

Sunday morning sessions started with individual delegates playing while the men of Ripley Morris danced and gave feedback to the musicians from a dancer's perspective. There were also sessions on playing as a massed band, and on playing as organised groups for clubs own performances, given the tendency these days for dances to be performed to the accompaniment of more than one musician.

I would like to record my sincere thanks to Leaders Clive, Tim, Keith and Sylvia for their input throughout the Instructional. I also owe a sincere debt of gratitude to Gilbert and David Butler and to Sally-Anne Booth for splendid catering and other support over the weekend, and finally, but by no means least, to the Ripley Morris Men for hospitality and dancing for the musicians on Sunday morning.

Feedback from the attendees has been very positive and certainly encouraging of running future Instructionals. The form and nature of these needs some consideration. My opinion is that the course is not financially viable as a stand-alone event, and benefits greatly from being associated with an occasion such as an Ale Feast. This has certainly been the case in the past with Instructionals held at Wilstone in collaboration with Whitchurch. This confers two main benefits. Bookings on venues can be held open up until the date of the event itself without incurring potential financial penalties, and a dancing side is available to allow musicians to perform and receive constructive comment. Ripley would most certainly be happy to host this event again at some stage. The nucleus of a teaching "faculty" exists but a single venue may not be the best option. Possibly the answer is for two or three sides to act as hosts on a rotational basis to run the instructional in association with one of their own events such as an Ale Feast or a Day of Dance.

Malcolm Frier Ripley Morris Men

f. Eastern

Mike Stevens (2013)

In September I sent out a survey document to assess the situation of the Morris Ring member and associate sides in the East. I received completed surveys from fifteen current sides - a pleasing number and a slight increase on last year, so thank you to all those bagmen. The Morris Ring Bagman has requested that Area reports be brief and focussed on issues rather than news, so I'm going to summarise the factual information I've received and the comments expressed. There are now 16 member sides and seven associates, of which a couple declare they are "insurance only" associates. Having studied the responses I'd make the following personal observations: One or two sides are still very well supported with many members; others manage with more modest numbers but are still successful in what they

attempt to do. Several have found their low membership makes organising things difficult and the future uncertain. Whilst one bagman reports his side as being on the edge of viability and dependent on events shared with other sides two others have already succumbed during 2012 (more of them, below).

I notice that more sides are seeking to "borrow" members from other sides when they are short of men, so a good strategy for all might be to enhance links with neighbours and share members. (After all, it used to be said in the predominantly male colleges of Oxford that there were enough women to go round as long as they kept going round.) On member numbers - for the area as a whole (but excluding the two sides that have resigned), the number of members lost seems about the same as the number gained (and the same as the number of youngsters): i.e. Morris Ring side membership is about in balance, but most sides report a profile that is getting older and with competing demands on individuals.

Sides report their membership to be between 12 and 48, with from 2 to 7 musicians and between 5 and 15 regular dancers. Sides report dancing out from 6 to 30 times a year, with most averaging 12 weekly or fortnightly evening appearances in the Summer. The season for sword and mummers teams is of course the Winter.

Finance: Collections are typically £10 per pub to £50 for an evening of several spots, but a couple of sides report collecting very little. The number of paid bookings reported varies from zero (we don't like them/they don't suit our dance) to 10, with one side accepting 4 bookings but turning down 15! Fees achieved vary from £20 for a gig on expenses only to £350, with £75-£200 being the popular range for fees achieved.

Eleven sides hosted at least one event for other sides/dancers to attend, whilst most sides attended at least one Morris Ring Meeting or Day of Dance, and many attended several other events.

A few recruitment successes were reported. Eight sides reported new men joined (circa 20 men in total) whilst nine sides lost a similar number, including several moved away or to University - which means they may join other sides.

Nine sides report a total of 19 members under the age of 20, of whom 3 are away at university. Ten bagmen were positive about their season, whilst three were disappointed. Most reported a busy season buoyed by the Jubilee and Olympics. Concerns raised were: their aging membership: 4, numbers: 4, fitness and injuries: 3, recruitment: 5.

It is with mixed feelings that I finish with these comments from the two sides no longer in the Morris Ring:

- **from Royal Liberty Morris** (on becoming a mixed side):

Yes a mixed side to save Royal Liberty from demise. We are now with Open Morris and our membership has shot up to at least 30+ which includes 10 children from 5 to 15 and 2 toddlers who get rather upset if they haven't got hankies or a plastic stick in their hand.

- **from Harwich MM** (now defunct):

Harwich Morris have now admitted defeat and called it a day. Some of the members have started a mixed Cotswold side based in Dovercourt called "Leading Lights Morris". It has taken a lot of "soul searching" to finally admit this and throw in the towel but hopefully we can still keep Cotswold Morris on the Tendring Peninsula!

All comments welcome - Mike Stevens, Eastern Area Representative.

g. South West and Wales Jed Dunn (2014)

No report received

h. South Midlands Roger Comley (2015)

To enable more fun and good company at many Ales and Feasts our sides bagmen need us to think ahead, to respond requests and invitations and to keep our diaries up-to-date rather than 'just in time' responses.

Please use your Area Rep to help advertise your events and use the Morris Ring Display boards which are in my custody for your use.

Look for your local tradition and custom to celebrate, or "make one up" which will then become one. Scallop Dancing could be just the thing you need!

Wassail Roger

i. South East

Fred Hands (2013)

The majority of clubs in the South East area are continuing to function with an ever aging membership. Recruiting this year has not been a major problem for most clubs and the majority have picked up one or two new members, in most cases these are older men over 50 who are new to Morris dancing.

There are as always exceptions and **Blackheath** have managed to recruit 4 men, in the 25-35 age group. **Cinque Ports** also managed to recruit 4 men including two thirteen year olds. Other clubs managing to attract youngsters were **Broadwood** with 2 in their 30s, and **Wadard** with a ten year old who's Father dances with the side. East Surrey managed to recruit 5 men however they were all in the 45-55 age group. Several other clubs also managed to pick up one or two new members so that numbers are maintained. The majority of new recruits were found not through specific recruiting events but in most cases through word of mouth and other events **East Surrey** held two specific recruiting events which were both unsuccessful but got 5 new members through running an introduction to Morris dancing for a local church group and a poster in their local pub. **Hartley** managed to get two new members from a Morris taster session at the end of the summer.

Four clubs reached notable anniversaries in 2012 **Ashdown** and **Broadwood** both celebrated 40 years **Ashdown** held a day of dance for all past and present members and **Broadwood** held a weekend of dance for their closest sides **Thames Valley** and **Hartley** both celebrated 60 years **Thames Valley** celebrated with guests after the Claygate Flower Show, which was where **TVMM** put in its first appearance all those years ago. And **Hartley** hosted a very successful Morris Ring Meeting.

Only two clubs in this area were involved in events for the Olympic Games. **Hartley** were involved in dancing prior to the Torch relay as it passed through Borough Green in Kent and **Blackheath** danced at the closing ceremony. **Long Man** had 2 men accompanied & 1 of them played music for a children's Morris side (Plumpton Black Brook) when they performed at the Olympic Games.

The overall situation is that a few sides are really thriving the majority are currently maintaining at a comfortable level while there are about 6 clubs that are struggling with barely functional numbers

Future Programme.

- a. Morris Ring Meetings 2014 and beyond. See below (Bagman)
- b. Instructionals

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting.

16. A.O.B. (Notified to Squire in advance please.)

Squire's Massed Dances for 2013

ADDERBURY	Lads a-Bunchum	Constant Billy
BAMPTON	Banbury Bill/Rose Tree	Maid of the Mill
BLEDINGTON	Idbury Hill	Young Collins
BRACKLEY	Jockey to the Fair	
BUCKNELL	Queen's Delight	
FIELDTOWN	The Valentine	Balance the Straw
HEADINGTON QUARRY	Constant Billy	Laudnum Bunches
LICHFIELD	Vandals of Hammerwich	



Live Music (with acknowledgements to Phil Little of The Live Music Forum)

We all know that as a result of extensive campaigning Morris dancing and dancing of a similar nature was exempted from many of the restrictions imposed by the Licensing Act 2003 (see Schedule 1, Part 2, Clause 11) but you may be interested to know that the Government now plans further relaxation of entertainment laws beginning in April 2013.

The main points of interest are:

- Live music - The Live Music Act audience threshold for permitted music performance will go up from 200 to 500 in on-licensed premises and workplaces.
- Recorded music will be treated in the same way as live music in on-licensed premises between 08:00 to 23:00 (i.e. with an audience limit of 500 and the prospect of a Review if noise nuisance is caused).
- Live and recorded music held on premises owned by Local Authorities, hospitals, nurseries and schools (except higher education) will be exempt from licensing requirements for audiences up to 500 people.

- Community premises such as church and village halls and community centres will be exempt from licensing requirements for live and recorded music for audiences of up to 500 people.
- The Performance of Plays and Dance will be deregulated for audiences of up to 500 between the hours of 08:00 to 23:00.



MORRIS RING PUBLICATIONS

☺ **Anthony Foard:** Editor of the Morris Circular

33 Cunningham Drive, Bromborough, Wirral, CHESHIRE. CH63 0JX

Mobile Tel: 01513344566

thecircular@themorrisring.org

☺ **Andrew Bullen** Co-editor of the Morris Dancer

619 E. 111th St. Chicago, IL. 60628

Phone: 773-291-0005 Mobile: 773-297-6714

abullen@ameritech.net

☺ **Mac McCoig** Co-editor of the Morris Dancer

8 Redhills, Eccleshall, Staffordshire ST21 6JW

01785 851052

mac.mccoig@btinternet.com

☺ **On-line Links:**

<http://www.themorrisring.org/> the main MR website with millions of pages stuffed to the gunnels with all you need to know about the MR.

<http://groups.google.com/group/the-morris-ring?hl=en&pli=1> The Morris Ring Google Group (MRGG). Forum for debate or announcements. Private site; Contact Morris Ring Bagman to register to use.

<https://sites.google.com/site/morrisring/?pli=1> Morris Ring Clubs

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Morris-Ring/158759257502840> Morris Ring Facebook site: Managed by Ollie King. oliver.king11@btinternet.com

Twitter <http://twitter.com/#!/TheMorrisRing>



If your side has forthcoming events or items of interest to all, make sure that you get them posted on one or more of these sites.

Morris Ring Meetings 2013

➤ **335th 5th - 7th April 2013** **Adelaide Morris Men**

Founding members of the Australian Morris Ring & Members of The Morris Ring 2010.

This is an up-date for those not attending so that you can see what we are missing (*attendees have received more information directly from Dave Smith of Adelaide MM*):

Friday evening 5 April 2013 From 5pm there will be the Meet and Greet at the [Daniel O'Connor Hotel](#) at 165 Tynte St. North Adelaide. Transport arranged. Afterwards, transport to the accommodation at [The Rymill Centre](#)

Saturday 6 April 2013 After breakfast, about 8am we will embark on a tour of the Adelaide Hills wineries and pubs, returning to the Rymill Centre for the Feast. Post Feast we shall have the opportunity to sing, dance, and play to our heart's content. There are no neighbours and no closing time! All meals and beer will be provided.

Sunday 7 April 2013 For those who wish we have made arrangements to attend the Church Service. Following which there will be a tour by bus of Adelaide sights and pubs - with plenty of dancing before returning to the Rymill Centre for a well-earned rest (or more dancing, singing and playing). For the Ring Meeting (Saturday to Monday morning) we are providing transport and food.

Monday 8 April 2013 After breakfast we will leave the accommodation - about 09:30 and people will be transported to their billets then the rest of the day is yours. For the evening meal we have booked an [Indian Restaurant for anyone interested](#). This will commence at 6pm and be open to family and friends as well as dancers.

Tuesday 9 April 2013 For those that will, there is another opportunity to see the sights of Adelaide and do a little dancing.

Wednesday 10 April 2013 We head towards Melbourne stopping at Halls Gap in the [Grampian Mountain Range](#). Accommodation will cost \$90 per person for the two nights. Food will be on top of that.

Thursday 11 April 2013 Local sites and walks in the Grampians in Victoria. Again any cost will be yours but if you are interested in the countryside costs will be minimal.

Friday 12 April 2013 Travel to Ballarat and dance in a local attraction and then on to Melbourne for another Meet and Greet. This will be a chance to meet other Australian sides and see a different aspect of Morris in Australia.

Saturday/Sunday More dancing and a tour of Melbourne sights. Finishing about 7pm on the Sunday.



Saturday 20th April 2013 JMO Day of Dance: Exeter 10.00am - 4.00pm.



Hosts: Great Western Morris, on behalf of the Morris Federation.

Dancing in Exeter at a number of great dance spots in this historic, busy city with the opportunity for those who want it to get together in the evening for some music, singing and socialising, and Great Western invite teams who want to stay over to dance with them on Sunday at a venue local to Exeter.

Details of B&Bs, hotels, campsites, car parks, pubs, etc. will be provided later, and there will be a website dedicated to the Day of Dance, updated as more information is gathered.

Contact Jed Dunn, Morris Ring SW&W Area Rep (jedjed@hotmail.co.uk) if your side would like to be one of the 15 groups representing the Morris Ring at this prestigious event. Jed will require the following information:

- Team name
- Contact name & Contact email
- Approximate number attending (ball-park figure is all we need)
- Dance style (e.g. Cotswold, North-West, Rapper, Border, Molly, Appalachian, Longsword)
- Whether your side will be staying in Exeter for the evening and/or wishing to dance on Sunday?
- Any additional notes (e.g. children's side, sharing musician with...)



➤ **336th Meeting 31st May - 2nd June Thaxted Meeting**

The meeting starts on the Friday evening with sessions in all of the Thaxted pubs and informal dancing at The Star. After leisurely tours of some splendid village pubs in the outstanding North Essex countryside during the day on Saturday we then reach the main event of the weekend. This consists of the two processions that meet in Town Street followed by two massed shows of massed and show dances with a feast in the interval. This culminates in the Horn Dance, the climax, in front of an appreciative audience of several hundred people.

On Sunday there is to be a dedication of a window in the church for John Colbert, with his old side Woodside MM attending.

Attending for the whole weekend are Cambridge, Chalice, Durham Rams, Letchworth, Moulton, Rutland, Stafford, Whitchurch and Westminster. Colchester, Dolphin, East Suffolk, Etcetera, Mayflower, and Standon are there just for the Saturday.

Bagman for the meeting Ian Anderson 01702 466335
iandbanderson@btinternet.com



➤ **337th 21st - 23rd June Dolphin Morris  Men**

Dolphin Morris Men are celebrating 45 years of dancing in the East Midlands. It will be relaxed and low key, containing all the best elements of a good Morris weekend with the minimum of pomp and ceremony.

There are two excellent pubs in the village. The Kings Head is likely to have a lively music and song session on both Friday night and after the Feast on Saturday. For those who prefer a quieter evening there is the Anchor.

On Saturday, there will be two bus tours visiting the surrounding area with pubs and venues we hope you will enjoy. There will be a church service on Sunday with dancing in the church, followed by a short display in the church yard. The dancers will then process through Sutton Bonington to the Kings Head, the site for the massed dancing and lunch. Dolphin will be inviting local non-Ring sides to this part of the weekend and some will include women dancers and musicians.



➤ **338th** 5th - 7th July Martlet Sword & Morris Men (60th Anniversary)

Friday: Arrival after 6.30pm, food available from 8.00pm -10.00pm. During the evening there will be informal dancing or a visit to the "Wilkes Head" CAMRA regional pub of the year.

Saturday: After a hearty breakfast we will board one of three buses to tour the local area all tours will visit the South Coast during the tour. At 3.30pm all tours will come together for a massed display on Chichester Cathedral green. After the displays we will make our way back to Westergate School. The evening will include the Feast followed by singing and dancing as is the norm at a Morris Ring meeting.

Sunday: After breakfast the men that wish can attend a Church service at St Paul and Peter the Great at 10.00am. We will then process to the festival theatre for a massed display at 11.30am. This will be followed by lunch in a nearby hall. After lunch any clubs are not wishing to rush off we may be able to arrange an afternoon visit to Langham Brewery.

The sides that have been accepted are Winchester, Whitchurch, Ewell St Mary's, Ravensbourne, Men of Wight, Thames Valley, Westminster, Ripley, Trigg, Great Yorkshire Morris, Wessex, East Suffolk, Green Man and Dartington, with Victory attending for the day.

Further information from festivaldirector-martletmorrismen@hotmail.co.uk

Peter Davey, Festival Director, Martlet Sword and Morris Men.



339th 23rd - 25th August 2013 Silkeborg Morris

Accommodation will be in the Danhostel in Copenhagen City.

Friday (All day): Welcome and possible dance session for early arrivals
Dinner - At Bryggens Kulturhus (close to the hostel), followed by informal dance or pub visit

Saturday: Massed dances near the Queens Castel; Saint Albans church and the little mermaid with a Feast in the evening.

Contact: Jacob Christensen

mail@silkeborgmorrismen.dk



Morris Ring Meetings 2014 and beyond

We are still looking for sides to host meetings in 2014 and beyond.
So far we have.....

2014 80th Anniversary of Foundation of the Morris Ring

- March ARM Hosted by TBA
- JMO Event. Hosted by the Cambridge Morris on behalf of the Morris Ring.
- Spring Devil's Dyke Morris Men Venue: King's College, Ely
- TBC Thaxted Morris Meeting
- 5th-7th Sept. Dartington Morris Men (to coincide with the end of Robin Springett's term of office.)

2015

- March ARM Hosted by TBA
- TBC Thaxted Morris Meeting
- Late June Great Yorkshire Morris



Dancing with Staves: One Day Workshop with Roy Dommett

Date: Saturday 5th October 2013

Venue: Saltford Community Hall, (on A4 between Bath and Bristol) BS31 3BY

The day will include a talk by Philip Hoyland.

Tickets £12 available in April Further info from: somersetmorris@hotmail.com

Barbara Butler



Classic FM's Hall of Fame Throughout the year Classic FM champion and play classical arrangements of English folk music. They invite you to get involved by voting for your favourite pieces.

Everyone can vote here: <http://halloffame.classicfm.com//2013/vote/>



Thank You: "I thought I'd write to say a big thanks to The Morris Ring for helping us promote the dance Displays for our February tour. We've been totally bowled over by the response and now have 100+ dance groups taking part over the new few weeks with as many as 13 teams displaying at each venue.

The main display blog on our website is here

www.thelockindanceshow.co.uk/dance-displays-blog/

And there are individual links to each display which can be shared below

Thanks again for all your help!" **Damien Barber**
Breaking Tradition Ltd | The Demon Barbers



Jig Workshop run by "The Knights of King Ina" (of Open Morris)

This will be a practical workshop day with the aim to leave the participant with a solo or duet dance to perform and practice. Whilst it is aimed at looking at the dancing a good jig is the performance of dancer and musician together so there will be information and advice for playing for jigs from our musicians available as part of the workshop.

The day will comprise 3 sessions

- Interpreting the notes and sources; working through the information to dance it
- Dancing the jig as collected
- Progression and interpretations - making it your own dance,

Venue: Meadway Hall, Ham Lane, Compton Dundon,
Somerton, Somerset TA11 6PQ

Date: March 17th 2013 **Time** = 10:30am to 4.30pm

Cost: £10 per attendee to include coffee, tea, cake; honesty bar provided; bring a packed lunch.

Contact: Andrew Knight (Knights of King Ina) 01963 351477

(<http://www.koki.org.uk>)



If you didn't receive this we've the wrong e-mail address for you
"Your Morris Ring *Find A Side* Entry

A quick note, sent under the cover of darkness, to advise you of improvements we have made to the Morris Ring Website "Find a Side" pages. As well as your side's location, website address (where published) and contact name and phone number, we have now added the contact e-mail address we have been given for the Bagman.

If you've received this, this is the latest contact address, as notified to The Morris Ring Bagman or Treasurer, that we have for your side.

This e-mail, as well as notifying you of this update, is to allow you the opportunity to correct the information or indeed, to opt out of this feature. Just drop me a reply if you need any changes to be made (I'll pass on changes to Charlie Corcoran and Steve Archer).

If you do not wish your personal e-mail address to be made public you may want to consider creating a generic "bagman@sidenamewebsite.com" as many sides are now doing. This has the advantage of anonymity as well as ease of administration where post holders change. Your side's published address remains the same; as all that is required is a simple tweak from your Webmaster (he said, confidentially).

The new functionality will also allow me, on request, in my capacity as Web Editor, to provide you with a listing of Morris Ring Bagmen's' contact details, should you have a need.

Click here <<http://www.themorrisring.org/find-side>> and follow the instructions, to check your side's entry.

Peter de Courcy The Morris Ring Website Editor in Chief
(better known as Kennet's Fool)

Redding Moreys and 10th August 2013



The earliest record of Morris dancing in Reading, Berkshire dates from 1513 so the town has got a 500th anniversary to celebrate this year: on the 10th August 1513 the wardens of St Laurence church, Reading, recorded that they paid 3d (three old pence = about 1½ new pence) for, amongst other things, "ale for the morris

dancers". This is not the oldest record of Morris dancing in the UK but it is the oldest in Reading.

On 10th August 1513 the church would have invited the Morris dancers to take part in a "church ale" - a sort of fete with fun, games and ale designed to raise money for the church. (At that time churches brewed their own ale specifically for sale to the public with the aim of making as much money as possible.) Morris dancing had probably first appeared in England 50 years earlier as a courtly entertainment by professional performers but by 1513 churches, Guilds and the common man were emulating them. The dancers at this event were probably ordinary workers, possibly all employed by the same wealthy landowner, dancing with colourful tabards supplied by the church and worn over their own clothes to music probably provided by a pipe and tabor.

For a long time historians have agreed on these facts but while pictures of that era show Morris men dancing in contortions without sticks or handkerchiefs no one knew what the steps or movements were, how they fitted the music, or indeed, what music was played. A group calling themselves **Redding Moreys** have got together to try to re-create a historically accurate 1513 Morris side. Using the "The Gresley Manuscript", (a book of dance notations and tunes from about that time discovered a few years ago in Leicestershire) and the work done by the now defunct "Rose Moresk" group, Redding Moreys plan to score a first by marking the anniversary with an authentic re-enactment.

They will be joined by many of the local Morris sides, when they dance in Reading on 10th August 2013 at an event coordinated by Peter deCourcy of the Kennet Morris Men.

Redding Moreys are keen to hear from anyone, male or female, who would like to join them. They are looking for dancers (the 1513 dancers would have been male), pipe and tabor players and people willing to make the performers' clothing using materials and methods of the early 1500s. Redding Moreys meet in St Mary's Church Hall, Church Lane, Shinfield, RG2 9BY on the first Sunday of each month from 12.30 to 3.30pm.

This is not an easy or cheap undertaking and the group is keen to hear from anyone who might be interested in helping them financially.

Information supplied by Chris Hutchinson of Yateley 01252 875510



For Sale "Thames Valley Morris Men have five pairs of antlers which are



now surplus to requirements - and taking up space in my garage. As you can see from the photo, they are mounted on poles and have been used by TVMM for their version of the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance. If any Morris side would like them they're yours, but you'll have to collect them from Claygate (near Esher) in Surrey. We're not asking for any money, but we'll be pleased to

accept a donation to our funds from the lucky new owner. If you're interested, please get in touch with me, John Elkins, TVMM Bagman at john.elkins@hotmail.co.uk or on 01372 809 583."

And finally.....

If you have not applied to attend the ARM please contact John Bush of Whitchurch MM as a matter of some urgency - the venue are requiring numbers and John needs to know how much ale to order.

As an added incentive to those attending the ARM, we are pleased to be able to offer FREE use of the 25m 6 lane swimming pool, and also, the Gym, so if these appeal to you make sure that you bring the appropriate kit with you.

Steve Adamson will not be bringing the Morris Shop with him, but is happy to bring pre-orders with him, to distribute on the Saturday.

On a personal level please will you check your email systems and erase my @naswt.net and @longslade.leics.sch.uk email addresses. Only use the bagman@themorrisring.org or charliecorcoran7@ntlworld.com addresses.

Charlie

Bagman of the Morris Ring

